

month-by-month timeline

The countdown is on—you have fewer than forty weeks. The biggest to-do you are going to tackle is obviously growing a baby, which means knowing what to eat, quit, and do, including doctor visits and tests to get. And then there are all the other important tasks—setting up a nursery, getting insurance and finances in order, even just buying new clothes for yourself!

before you get pregnant

- Start tracking your cycle, so you know when you are fertile (page 16).
- Visit your regular doctor or ob-gyn for a preconception checkup (page 17).
- See the dentist. (You may not be able to have X-rays or certain dental work once you are pregnant. Pregnancy can also make you more vulnerable to gum disease and other problems.)
- Get German measles and chicken pox immunizations. (They are not recommended during pregnancy.)
- Talk to relatives about family medical history, including birth defects, miscarriages, and genetic disorders. (If there are any concerns, you may want to have genetic counseling and testing before trying to conceive. Your doctor will ask you about this at your first visit.)
- Start taking prenatal vitamins. (Yes, you do this before you're pregnant. That's because the folic acid they contain helps prevent birth defects when taken in early pregnancy and before.)
- Apply for a private disability policy if you are self-employed. (This insurance policy can help you receive payment during time you do not work after birth.)

month 1: weeks 1-4*

- Take an official pregnancy test.
- Calculate your (approximate) due date (page 20).
- Find an obstetrician (page 22).
- Schedule your first prenatal checkup as soon as possible.
- Prepare your health history (page 24).

* We start counting pregnancy from the first day of your last menstrual period

- Quit all those pregnancy no-nos (page 26).
- Create a pregnancy nutrition plan (page 28).
- Start taking a prenatal vitamin (if you haven't already; page 29).

month 2: weeks 5–8

- Go on your first prenatal visit (page 36).
- Schedule first trimester tests (page 38).
- Figure out how pregnancy and baby will affect your finances (page 40).

month 3: weeks 9–13

- Start buying maternity clothes (page 50).
- Revamp your beauty routine (page 52).
- Plan a babymoon for the second trimester (page 53).
- Chorionic villus sampling (CVS) test (weeks 10–12; page 39)
- Noninvasive prenatal testing (NIPT) (around week 10; page 39)
- Multiple marker screening/nuchal translucency screening (NTS; weeks 10–14; page 39)
- Decide how to tell friends and family you are pregnant (page 56).
- Month 3 prenatal visit (page 59)

month 4: weeks 14–17

- Schedule second trimester tests (page 62).
- Tell your boss about the pregnancy (page 64).
- Start planning your maternity leave and postpartum work schedule (page 65).
- Decide whether you and your partner will both return to work after baby (page 66).
- Month 4 prenatal visit (page 67)

month 5: weeks 18–22

- Amniocentesis and triple screen (weeks 15–18; page 62)
- Midpregnancy ultrasound (page 62)
- Find out baby's gender, if you want to know (page 70).

continues

month-by-month timeline

continued

- Work on choosing baby's name (page 72).
- Brainstorm nursery design ideas (page 76).
- Start your baby registry (page 78).
- Book childbirth and parenting classes (page 80).
- Start interviewing pediatricians (page 82).
- Look into child care options (page 84).
- Pass baby shower guest list to host (page 90).
- Month 5 prenatal visit (page 91)

month 6: weeks 23–27

- Start babyproofing your home (page 94).
- Plan your postbaby finances (page 98).
- If banking cord blood, figure out where and order kit (page 101).
- Decide whether or not you will circumcise, if it is a boy (page 102).
- Start counting baby's kicks (page 104).
- Month 6 prenatal visit (page 105)

month 7: weeks 28–31

- Schedule third trimester tests, if you can (page 108).
- If using a doula, start interviews (page 109).
- Tour your hospital's maternity ward (page 110).
- Start writing your birth plan (pages 112).
- Arrange for postbaby help (page 115).
- Brush up on breastfeeding (page 116).
- Update or write will, and decide guardianship.
- Buy life insurance.
- Update 401(k) and retirement account beneficiaries.
- Start childbirth class.
- Your host sends out shower invites.
- Month 7 prenatal visits (two this month; page 120)

month 8: weeks 32–35

- Prepare baby announcements ahead of time (page 124).
- Make sure you have all baby essentials (page 126).
- Have your baby shower.
- Send thank-you notes for gifts (start one week after shower).
- Finish the nursery (including painting).
- Prepare all baby first-aid and emergency items (page 128).
- Finish your maternity leave paperwork (page 129).
- Pack your hospital bag (page 132).
- Month 8 prenatal visits (two this month; page 136)

month 9: week 36 to delivery

- Install the car seat and get it inspected.
- Find out what screening tests your hospital routinely gives newborns (page 157).
- Speak with your doctor about any additional tests you may need.
- Group B strep test (weeks 35–37; page 108)
- Biophysical profile (if your doctor orders one; page 108)
- Cook and freeze meals for postdelivery.
- Month 9 prenatal visits (weekly until delivery; page 144)
- Birth (cute how we put that there like a little to-do, right?)

newborn: month 1

- 1-month pediatrician visit (weeks 2–4; page 177)

newborn: month 2

- Baby's old enough to be accepted at some day cares (week 6).
- Meet with manager to discuss work hours and return to projects.
- 2-month pediatrician visit (page 178)

baby: month 4

- 4-month pediatrician visit (page 188)

See Planning Baby's Checkups (page 162) and Tracking Baby's Vaccines (165) for the rest!